

Memo

To: Director Food Distribution Division
From: Carol Lackey, School Nutrition Director
CC:
Date: 04/20/00
Re: Improvements to the Commodity Program

My system is a part of the Georgia Distribution Program. I have been extremely pleased with the distribution and total commodity program in our state. My county relies heavily on commodities to make our program viable and also to ensure that students are receiving quality food. I would like to make the following comments on each section:

PROCUREMENT AND SPECIFICATIONS

I support the use of long term contracts and best-value contracts

We must keep USDA standards for specifications. Industry cannot be allowed to write the specifications. Ground Beef is an example. USDA present standards are higher meaning less fat. We need this to meet the School Meals initiative requirements for nutrient analysis.

Commercial labels would be a nightmare for inventory tracking.

COMMODITY PROCESSING

I support umbrella contracts.

Expanding substitutability is dangerous due to quality of imported products.

Who will monitor distribution so that we receive full planned assistance?

COMMODITY HOLDS AND RECALLS

I support these changes

COMUNICATION/PILOTS/OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Computer connectivity to the school level would be a disaster!! Many, many schools do not have computers and even if they do, there is limited technical knowledge. This alone would prevent the use of commodities. Is this your goal?

The state of Georgia operates a model program. System directors are allowed to choose commodities and arrival dates. PLEASE do not punish states that facilitate the use of commodities because some have done a poor job.